

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Original) At least three-layered, coextruded, tubular, biaxially stretched seamless tubular casing comprising, viewed from the outside inwards,
  - a) an outer layer A which comprises as the main component a polyamide or a mixture of several polyamides,
  - b) optionally a layer B which has an oxygen-blocking character,
  - c) optionally a core layer C which comprises as the main component a polyamide or a mixture of several polyamides,
  - d) a layer D which has an adhesion-promoting action with respect to the adjacent layer C or B or A and the adjacent layer E and
  - e) an inner layer E which comprises as the main component a polyamide or a mixture of several polyamides,
  - f) optionally further layers and additives, wherein
  - g) at least one layer comprises natural fibres having a fibre length in the range of from 5 to 10,000  $\mu\text{m}$  and/or a natural fibre mixture of various fibre types and/or fibre lengths.
2. (Original) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, characterized in that the main components of layer A comprise either an aliphatic homopolyamide or an aliphatic copolyamide or a blend of aliphatic homo- and copolyamide or a blend of aliphatic homopolyamide and a partly aromatic polyamide.
3. (Original) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 2, characterized in that the partly aromatic polyamides used are substantially built up from m-xylylenediamine units and adipic acid units or from units of hexamethylenediamine, isophthalic acid and terephthalic acid.
4. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, characterized in that the natural fibres are cellulose fibres.

5. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, characterized in that the natural fibres are contained in at least one of the layers in an amount of from 0.1 to 70 wt.%, based on the total weight of the layer.
6. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, characterized in that layer D comprises modified homo- and/or copolymers of  $\alpha$ -olefins having 2 to 8 C atoms, which contain grafted-on or copolymerized monomers from the group consisting of  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and an aliphatic homopolyamide or an aliphatic copolyamide or a blend of aliphatic homo- and copolyamide or a blend of aliphatic homopolyamide and a partly aromatic polyamide /or monocarboxylic acids and/or derivatives thereof, or.
7. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, characterized in that layer B comprises an approximately completely hydrolyzed ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer (EVOH) having an ethylene content of between 25 and 53 % by weight or modified homo- and/or copolymers of  $\alpha$ -olefins having 2 to 8 C atoms, which contain grafted-on or copolymerized monomers from the group consisting of  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and/or monocarboxylic acids and/or derivatives thereof, an aliphatic homopolyamide or an aliphatic copolyamide or a blend of aliphatic homo- and copolyamide or a blend of aliphatic homopolyamide and a partly aromatic polyamide.
8. (Currently amended) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, characterized in that layer C comprises an aliphatic homopolyamide or an aliphatic copolyamide or a blend of aliphatic homo- and copolyamide or a blend of aliphatic homopolyamide and a partly aromatic polyamide ~~or optionally a polyolefin homo- or copolymer or a blend of these.~~
9. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, characterized in that layer E comprises an aliphatic homopolyamide or an aliphatic copolyamide or a blend of aliphatic homo- and copolyamide or a blend of aliphatic homopolyamide and a partly aromatic polyamide.
10. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, characterized in that the sum of all the layer thicknesses is 25 to 80  $\mu\text{m}$ .

11. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, characterized in that this is heat-set.
12. Cancelled
13. Cancelled
14. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, characterized in that layer B comprises an approximately completely hydrolyzed ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer (EVOH) having an ethylene content of between 29 and 38 % by weight and a thickness between 3 and 6  $\mu\text{m}$ .
15. (Previously presented) A wrapping material for paste-like and liquid fillings which comprises the casing as claimed in claim 1.
16. (Previously presented) The wrapping material as claimed in claim 15, wherein the paste-like filling is sausage meat.
17. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, wherein said layer D has a thickness between 1 and 6  $\mu\text{m}$ .
18. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 1, wherein said layer E has a thickness less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .
19. (Previously presented) Seamless tubular casing according to claim 14, wherein said layer D has a thickness between 1 and 6  $\mu\text{m}$ . and said layer E has a thickness less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$  and the sum of all the layer thicknesses is 25 to 80  $\mu\text{m}$ .
20. (New) At least three-layered, coextruded, tubular, biaxially stretched seamless tubular casing comprising, viewed from the outside inwards,
  - a) an outer layer A which comprises as the main component a polyamide or a mixture of several polyamides,
  - b) optionally a layer B which has an oxygen-blocking character,

- c) optionally a core layer C which comprises as the main component a polyamide or a mixture of several polyamides or optionally a polyolefin homo- or copolymer or a blend thereof,
- d) a layer D which has an adhesion-promoting action with respect to the adjacent layer C or B or A and the adjacent layer E and
- e) an inner layer E which comprises as the main component a polyamide or a mixture of several polyamides,
- f) optionally further layers and additives, wherein
- g) at least one layer comprises natural fibres having a fibre length in the range of from 5 to 10,000  $\mu\text{m}$  and/or a natural fibre mixture of various fibre types and/or fibre lengths.